

R.I.P. Carl Carlton



Funk and R&B singer Carl Carlton passed on December 14 at age 73. His son, Carlton Hudgens II confirmed his passing on [Facebook](#). Carlton became famous for his 1981 hit, "She's A Bad Mama Mama (She's Built, She's Stacked)." The infectious single was a hit and became a staple of the culture, transcending generations. The Detroit native started his career in the '60s as the teenaged Little Carl Carlton. In those early days he recorded the songs "So What" and "Don't You Need A Boy Like Me" for local label Lando Records. He signed with Back Beat Records out of Houston in 1968 and scored a hit on the UK's Northern Soul scene with "Competition Ain't Nothing." He had a minor hit in 1971 with "I Can Feel It," which was the first recording he made dropping the "Little" from his name. His American breakthrough came in 1974 when he covered Robert Knight's "Everlasting Love."

The Back Beat label was sold to ABC in 1972 and by 1976 Carlton was involved in royalty disputes that stopped him from recording for a time. Leon Haywood helped him get a deal with 20th Century Records and he also penned "She's A Bad Mama Jama

(She's Built, She's Stacked)" for Carlton. The song earned Carlton a Grammy nomination and an unforgettable place in funk history. He released 10 albums over the course of his career and his first gospel song, "God Is Good," in 2010. Carlton was inducted into the Rhythm and Blues Hall of Fame in 2017. In 2023, he was featured in the "Rhythm, Love, and Soul" episode of the PBS series *American Soundtrack*.